

**Remarks of
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Commercial Space Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration**

**at the
National Space Symposium**

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Good afternoon. Thank you for that very kind introduction.

I want to thank Elliot Pulham, Steve Eisenhart, Bob Walker and the Space Foundation for extending us this opportunity.

Let me tell you -- it's an honor to represent the FAA here today, to represent FAA Administrator, Marion Blakey. We are proud to be one of the three, key Space organizations in this country, side-by-side with NASA and DOD.

The FAA is the commercial piece of Space. We've been licensing launch operations for going on 17 years

now. Until recently it was an exclusively Expendable Launch Vehicle business. But space flight today is on a new course where Reusable Launch Vehicles promise to play a prominent role.

It's not that Space is changing hands. There are just more hands as the era of private human space flight approaches and the FAA gets ready for it.

There's a little anecdote I just love to tell because it links aviation and Space; looks to the future by glancing at our history.

Back in the late 60's and early 70's, as a direct result of the Apollo program, Pan American Airways started taking reservations ... for the first commercial

flight ... to the moon. TWA jumped in, too, offering informal reservations.

Back at Pan Am, they eventually got 93,000 applications.

And one of those came from ... Ronald Reagan.

Of course, both President Reagan and Pan Am are now part of our history.

But you can imagine the smile on President Reagan's face if he knew that a couple of years from now, he actually could have bought a ticket – not for the moon – but certainly for the ride of a lifetime.

Well, that very chance is coming soon ... maybe to a spaceport near you.

The people who lined up to take Pan Am to the moon thirty-five years ago were betting on a dream.

The people lining up today are ready to take a ride on one.

Believe me, the FAA and our office in particular, could not be more excited about what's coming.

We realize how fortunate we are that just about the time that space flight technology in the private, entrepreneurial sector is coming into its own ... here we are and ready to go.

**And just about the time that the public is saying,
“hey, we’re ready for this” ... here we are at the FAA
saying ... “so ...are ... we.”**

**I can tell you that our approach is to be a
regulator ... not a hurdle. Our mandate is to
encourage, facilitate and promote the U.S. commercial
space transportation industry. That includes both
stalwart expendable launch vehicles AND passengers.
Our overarching goal is to bring all of the parties to the
table ... to make sure that we’re all pulling in the same
safety direction. After all, our mission is to protect the
uninvolved public during space launch activities.**

It's pretty clear that space has reentered the public's imagination. Secretary Mineta put in plainly when he said that we're democratizing space flight.

So where are we?

In late 2004, the President approved a new U.S. space transportation policy. He told us that the government needs to capitalize on the U.S. private sector, which offers opportunities to open new commercial markets, including public space travel. The Departments of Commerce and Transportation took those as marching orders.

The President's exclamation point was the Commercial Space Launch Amendments Act of 2004.

Just before the new year, we issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making for human space flight requirements. It covers both crew and space flight participants or passengers. The public comment period closed at the end of February, with comments coming from 37 different entities.

I'll say this for certain. When it comes to providing an opinion, folks are not shy. Here's just a sample of the questions raised: Should pilots and remote operators of launch vehicles that don't have aircraft characteristics be required to have an FAA pilot certificate? Should the crew be required to have an airman medical certificate? What age should a

spaceflight participant have to be before he or she can travel?

When you view those questions through the lens of safety – always the FAA’s Number One Goal – you can see they are good and perceptive questions. That’s the reason for the Notice of Proposed Rule Making. That’s why the comment period. That’s why it’s all under scrutiny and review as we speak.

As some of you know, we’ve also published an NPRM for experimental permits for reusable suborbital rockets. These permits are similar to experimental airworthiness certificates in aviation. They’ll help facilitate the research work of vehicle developers,

making the process of testing and development a little quicker as long as it's not for hire.

There's more ... much more. We've licensed the operation of five spaceports ... in Alaska, California, Florida and Virginia. Other applicants – in Oklahoma and New Mexico – are in the queue. The interest is considerable.

We've also formed a strong partnership with the Air Force and successfully developed common standards for expendable launch vehicles on federal and non-federal ranges. We want to avoid extra burdens to launch operators and make it more efficient for new entrants.

As a matter of fact, we co-hosted a meeting this past Monday with the Air Force where commercial reusable launch vehicle developers talked with the Air Force about needs and capabilities for the very first time.

The commercial developers described what they could deliver ... what they're working on. The Air Force described its needs going forward. The end result ... a face-to-face dialogue on how commercial space can be of service to the national defense. And that ... we'd all agree ... is a good thing ... a very good thing. There was a great deal of interaction and candid conversation which resulted in a commitment to go forward with additional meetings and visits by the Air Force to RLV company facilities.

We're also continuing along the path of cooperation with NASA by way of commercial orbital transportation services ...COTS. The goal here is to create a market in which commercial space transportation services are available to customers in the government and in the private sector. A number of companies have submitted proposals to NASA. The FAA expects the winners to apply for commercial licenses ... and/or permits as well.

So what's next?

Secretary Mineta gave a speech recently in which he emphasized the need ... the obligation ... to encourage innovation and support new developments in

aerospace. He focused on the need to ensure the safety of commercial space flights ... especially for passengers. He also predicted that in 2007, we'd be issuing permits for the testing of new spacecraft designed to take paying passengers into space.

Speaking of what's next ... I know you've already heard from Elon Musk. But I think it's appropriate to recognize that just as he took a setback that would have made others quit, he said: "We're in it for the long haul, and come hell or high water, we're going to make this work."

It is clear that Richard Branson thinks that commercial space is a good investment. Burt Rutan and Paul Allen seem to agree. I've got to tell you ... since

2004 and the flight of SpaceShipOne, there's a buzz in the air that's not going away. And it's not just among we space folk. People are talking about the "now and future" possibilities of commercial space. We could not be more pleased and we're going to be ready.

There's a rocket racing league that's waiting for a checkered flag. We've had 174 commercially licensed launches without any fatalities or property damage to the uninvolved public. That's something to raise the flag about. The future of commercial space is indeed bright.

Why the enthusiasm? Maybe it's because ... when it comes to space ... the rights stuff is not in short supply. Actually, I don't think there's a maybe in this

at all. When it comes to the people in this industry, you dream it ... you design it ... and you fly it. And no one is surprised when you do it.

Godspeed.